

VZCZCXRO9495
RR RUEHGR
DE RUEHKG #0167/01 0631610
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 041610Z MAR 09
FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7358
INFO RUEHSP/AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN 5186
RUCNCOM/EC CARICOM COLLECTIVE
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0549
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 0555
RUMIAAA/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KINGSTON 000167

SIPDIS, SENSITIVE

STATE FOR WHA/CAR - ANDRE CADIEUX, BRIDGET PREMONT
WHA/EPSC - DAVID SILVERMAN, ROBERT SCHWARTZ
WHA/PDA - CHAD WEST, JOHN DICKSON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ECON](#) [EFIN](#) [ENRG](#) [ETRD](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [KSUM](#) [JM](#) [XL](#)
SUBJECT: JAMAICA: 2009 SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS (SOA)

REF: STATE 8206 (292031Z JAN 09)

Summary

1. The Government of Jamaica (GoJ) has high expectations for the 2009 SOA to be held April 17-19 in Port-of-Spain. Post is implementing a number of public diplomacy outreach initiatives, and the SOA has begun to receive attention in the local media.
End Summary.

Foreign Minister's Expectations for SOA

2. Responding publicly to a question concerning expectations for meeting President Obama at the SOA, Jamaica's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade Dr. Kenneth Baugh recently stated: "It will be my first Summit of the Americas. The question is - what will be President Obama's attitude to the Caribbean? There has been some neglect [by the U.S.] over the past ten years. During the [U.S. Presidential] campaign, there was some sign the U.S. will give preference to the domestic economy. We need a larger common market in the region. The various FTAs can coalesce. The U.S. is our biggest trading partner. The CBI ends in 2010/2011. We are in negotiations to see what we will do. Possibly we might negotiate FTAs with the U.S. and Canada. We hope the SOA will give an indication of Pres. Obama's approach to the Caribbean and Latin America. I also hope to establish contact with Secretary Clinton. The issue of Cuba will come up. We [CARICOM] have discussed this at all our meetings. We called on the U.S. to end the blockade. NAFTA has been successful - we need a repeat in this region. We are keeping our eyes on CAFTA - it seems to have been a success so far."

Meeting with Jamaica's SOA Coordinator

3. EmbOff shared reftel talking points in the course of a private meeting with the GoJ's SOA Coordinator, Amb. Paul Robothom, the Under-Secretary for Bilateral and Regional Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (MFAFT), on the morning of February 23 (note: SOA website has not yet been updated to indicate that Robothom, rather than former MFAFT Permanent Secretary Amb. Douglas Saunders, is the GoJ's SOA Coordinator).

4. Robothom agreed that the upcoming Summit represented an excellent opportunity for the nations of the hemisphere to coordinate efforts across a broad range of issues, from energy and the environment to the global economic recession. He asked whether President Obama planned to meet separately with Caribbean leaders. He said the Canadians had invited Caribbean leaders to a breakfast on Saturday morning, April 18, and noted that this breakfast apparently would fill the only time designated on the "Provisional Programme" for

"Bilateral Discussions." (Comment: President Obama is extremely popular throughout the region, and Robothom clearly intended to convey that Caribbean leaders would welcome an opportunity for a separate meeting. End Comment.)

Post's Planned Public Diplomacy Outreach Initiatives

15. Kingston's Public Affairs Section (PAS) is planning the following PD initiatives preceding the Summit:

- press assistants are identifying a senior Jamaican journalist to attend the Foreign Press Center tour to Washington to meet with principals and experts on the Summit;
- a senior Jamaican journalist has agreed to serve as moderator at the pre-Summit civil society forum in Trinidad and will stay on to report on Summit events;
- an enthusiastic press release to all media announcing President Obama's first visit to the region;
- placement of an op-ed from Washington in coming days;
- depending on the amount of interest generated by mid-March, PAS may organize a media roundtable to discuss the Summit's theme, "Securing Our Citizens' Future by Promoting Human Prosperity, Energy Security, and Environmental Sustainability;"
- alternatively, a roundtable discussion with NGOs and other interested contacts;
- a digital video conference with a Washington expert and invited selected contacts and press.

SOA Op-Ed Featured in Jamaica Gleaner newspaper

16. The first op-ed discussing the Summit appeared in The Sunday Gleaner on March 1. Frequent contributor Jorge Heine, who holds a

KINGSTON 00000167 002 OF 002

Chair in Global Governance at the Balsillie School of International Affairs in Waterloo, Ontario, urges Caribbean leaders to use the Summit to highlight the specific conditions of the Caribbean and its needs as different from those of Latin America. Heine argues that opening the door a bit wider to free trade with Caribbean nations will not be enough to solve the region's many problems. He urges leaders to seek a meeting with President Obama to impress upon him the urgency of the situation in the Caribbean and recommends presenting him with a wish list of five items: 1) come through on a campaign promise of debt relief for the neediest developing nations; 2) re-think the "war on drugs" by turning around the "wrong-headed approach" to fight this problem without tackling the U.S. demand that drives it; 3) stop the repatriation of convicted criminals to the islands; 4) "dust off the old development tool kits" as the adage "trade, not aid" does not apply to a region that still needs to build up its productive capacity before having enough goods to trade in significant amounts; and 5) loosen up immigration restrictions for the entire region since English-speaking Caribbeans do very well in the U.S.

HEG